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FLASH BACK

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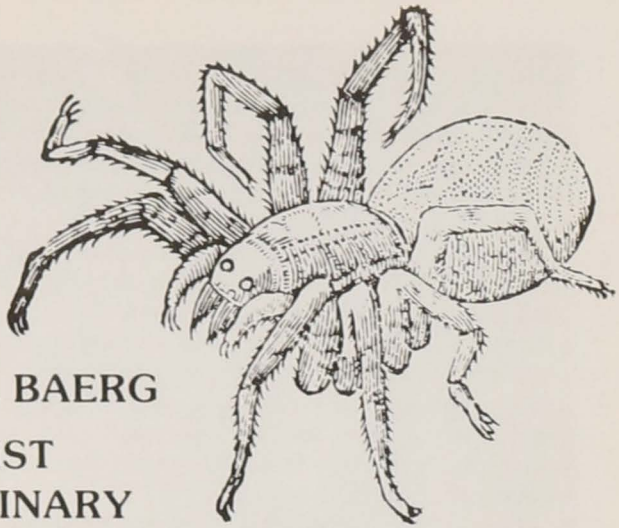


DR. WILLIAM J. BAERG

ENTOMOLOGIST EXTRAORDINARY

Editor's Note: Some years before his death on April 14, 1980, Dr. William J. Baerg wrote for his children an account of his life and forebears. His widow has allowed us to publish the following excerpts from this story, for which we are most grateful, as Dr. Baerg was a scholar known by colleagues in other countries, and lent luster to the University of Arkansas during his many years there.

My mother told me that I was born on September 24, 1885. This event happened on a farm three miles southwest of Hillsboro, Kansas. I was then the youngest of six — four boys and two girls. Two of the boys, John and Abe, were born in Russia, the others on the same farm. Before I was born, four children died in an epidemic of diptheria. After I was born, another boy, Gerhard, was added to the family. I shall call him George. He was two years younger than I and we were very close. An older brother, Peter, died at the age of twenty-six in 1902. One sister, Mary, died during an influenza epidemic in 1918. She was forty and left a husband and ten children. The remaining five of us lived until 1950 when our oldest brother John died at the age of eighty; the following year Abe died, also at the age of eighty. Sister Helena died in 1962 at the age of seventy-eight.

My parents left Russia for two reasons: to get out of Russia and to get to America, the land of Freedom. Their grandparents were among thousands of German Mennonites who left West Prussia, 1873-88. Catherine the Great wanted good farmers to occupy and develop a large tract of land taken from the Turks. Mennonites had acquired something of a reputation in Russia; Peter the Great had a Mennonite for his personal physician. Catherine offered a number of very substantial privileges: a large tract of fine farm land, freedom from military service and total freedom in religion. There were others such as exemption from taxes for a number of years, protection against bandits, etc. To start with, the Mennonites did not get the promised land, but a decidedly inferior tract. They gradually learned that the

other promises were not much better. However, the new settlers went to work and more came. More land was acquired in the Ukraine, in the Crimea, and elsewhere. By 1870 many of the Germans were presumably quite prosperous and although they were required to render forest service work in place of military duty, they still had practically complete religious freedom.

My parents left Russia in the spring or summer of 1874. At that time, they and their four children were living in the village of Nikolaidorf in the colony Molotschna, Melitopol Rayon, Ukraine. George and I saw their home when we were in Russia in 1929. It was in excellent condition and its residents were quite friendly. My father was a blacksmith and a fairly good woodworker. Among the belongings they brought to America with them were farm implements, as well as household goods and furniture. Among these was a large wagon my father had made, which remained in use until he quit farming about 1910.

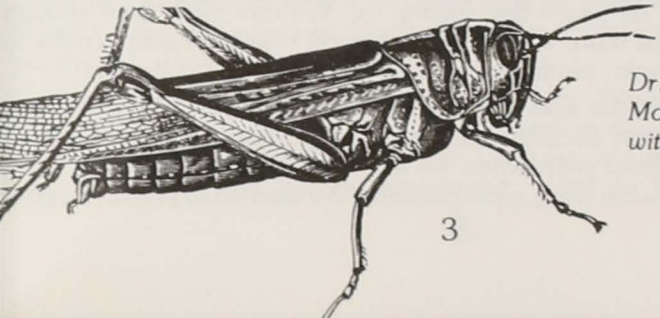
The family and goods made the trip by steamship and train via Antwerp and Philadelphia. The steamship trip was miserable — steerage for sixteen days, and much seasickness because of rough seas.

Kansas needed wheat farmers, and the Mennonites from southern Russia were exactly what was wanted. The governor welcomed them in Topeka, took them to the statehouse and made a speech appropriate to the occasion. More important attractions provided by Kansas were freedom from military service for Mennonites and Friends, and the opportunity to buy land in large lots, for group settlement, at $2-$3 an acre. Being allowed to settle in large groups was very comforting to the immigrants who spoke only low German and German. They did not learn to speak or read English and most of them didn't need to. My father learned but a few words; Mother didn't learn any of the new language.

In selecting their home site, they took a spot in a village, Hoffnungstal (Hope Valley) located along a portion of the South Cottonwood River. They soon realized they had made two mistakes: village arrangements, very satisfactory in Russia, would not do in the USA, and a home near the Cottonwood River was subject to disastrous floods. So the family moved to a new site where my father acquired a one-fourth section of land. Fortunately for the children, especially later for us two little boys, the local district school was across the road from our house. Of our first home I have no recollection, but it had walls of sod and a roof of reed grass or sedge grass. I do recall seeing the plow that had been used for cutting the sod. It was a very long mould board that would lay the sod over and down in a long ribbon.

There were no Indians to trouble my folks, but they did have trouble with grasshoppers which were not new to them — grasshoppers had been known to enter Europe in huge swarms. A new problem was prairie fires in late fall and early winter, and firebreaks had to be maintained for a number of years.

The first thing I remember is being tied up in the barn with my brother George, in the corner where the slop barrel stood! My parents were visiting



Dr. Baerg's Mother and Father with Familiar Pest

in Nebraska and a Mrs. Koop, a neighbor, had come to stay with us. She tied us up presumably because we required too much attention running loose. Our ages were, I believe, four and two.

When I reached the age of seven I was sent to school over my vigorous protests. I insisted it would do me no good because, as I said, "I don't know anything." I tried to play sick a number of times and on one occasion actually managed to have a severe attack of rheumatism in a shoulder.

For two years we were taught only German, which was a big help because our conversation at home and with friends was Low German. The years in the district school were pleasant; we had no trouble. The only bad experience was with a teacher named Harder who got me involved with some troublemakers and decided he'd better beat me along with the rest. I bitterly resented this; it was in my first year.

We stayed in school until we were fourteen. The last year was a complete repetition of the previous one; in all, we were no more than through the fifth grade. On the farm my first introduction to real work was painful. The first job was on a grain drill pulled by two horses. I simply could not see how I could guide those horses so as to have one of the two wheels of the drill follow the second shallow furrow across the field. I insisted I was too young, but convinced nobody. About the same time I had a hard time at the wheat and oat harvest. The binder was supposed to be pulled directly by three horses. We usually added one, often two, horses up in front. These had to be managed by a boy. The hitching device was such that when turning a corner it was all but impossible to keep one or both horses from stepping over the hitching strap. My father had his hands full managing three horses and the machinery, so he would get very angry when I could not keep the front team from getting over the traces. When I got old enough to set up bundles (shock wheat) I was very grateful indeed.

In spite of some rugged spots in our early years, life at home was mostly pleasant. Mother was very kind, considerate and affectionate. Father was a severe taskmaster. When he felt I deserved a spanking, I was sure to get it and it was real. After I was well along in the teens, Father got the idea (probably from one or other of the preachers) that every beating should be preceded by prayer. Grace before meals was regularly observed, as well as prayers before bedtime and usually Bible reading before breakfast. We ate mostly pork, with some chicken; fish when George and I went fishing. Beef was very rarely bought and very rarely slaughtered at home. Mother baked four loaves of bread at a time. Cornbread gradually came onto the table. Mother had to learn about this American dish, as she had to about tomatoes. Pies were frequent. A specialty in summer was Roll Kuchen, thin layers of dough, 3"x6", kept flat, fried in fat. We had more than enough sauerkraut. Of soups there were several: a good vegetable soup similar to but lighter than borscht; plum soup was thick and we called it moos.

When we reached the ages of perhaps twelve and fourteen we were no longer subject to much discipline and Father began to turn most of the farm work over to us. These years when we two felt we were doing most of the farm management were really quite pleasant. We learned to predict weather

and did a good deal of the planning. Father was quite indulgent, but there were certain tasks he retained, such as blacksmithing, sharpening plowshares, welding on a new point and the like.

These were also the years we were expected to get religion. George and I were exposed to many, many hours of revival sermons, prayer meetings and special evangelistic services. We would go to all of them because of the need for social life and to take the girls home. Before I was quite of age, I started back to school — a preparatory school operated by an old Mennonite minister. I attended for two years. In 1907, when I was twenty-two, I finally decided on a definite plan.

(Editor's Note: Dr. Baerg joined the first class at Tabor College in Hillsboro, Kansas in 1908. He states: "...until I went to Tabor I had nothing to read, no newspapers, no magazines, practically no books." While he attended Tabor and Kansas University, he spent his summers working in the harvest fields with threshing crews, going to Nebraska for the wheat harvest four seasons in succession. On one trip from Nebraska, they stopped in Lincoln to see the Wright Brothers fly their first airplane. He entered the University of Kansas in the fall of 1911 at the age of 26. In 1913 he took a summer job with the entomology department to study grasshoppers and the damage they did. At K. U. he was exposed to lectures by famous people, among them Emma Goldman, a notorious Nihilist, much talked about at the time. She talked of free love "which she recommended very highly." He mentions also, two courses which he greatly enjoyed at K. U., one of which was systematic botany taught by Grace Charles, "a most excellent teacher who made me like, no love, the technical names of plants." The other was introductory geology taught by Prof. Twenhofel.)

In the fall of 1915 I was ready and determined to go to Cornell and seriously specalize in entomology. Arriving on campus, I soon discovered that I now had to be a citizen of New York in order to be exempted from tuition in the College of Agriculture, so when registering on campus I gave my home address as Ithaca, New York. That next spring I got an assistantship in biology, paying $550 a year.

In the spring of 1917, W.D. Funkhouser who was one of the graudate students in entomology and also principal of the Cascadilla Boys' School, offered me a job teaching German to complete the year for his German teacher who had been drafted (World War I was on). As a German teacher I got very good pay and very good meals. Unfortunately for me, the army doctors found von Schenk's vision unsatisfactory, he was rejected, and I lost the job. However, having what seemed ample funds for the coming year, I spent the summer in Ithaca. A good deal of effort was devoted to the biology of the spittle insects. I walked many miles trying to find all their host plants.

I remember also a series of lectures given by William Howard Taft. He was then on the Supreme Court and his lectures dealt with the Court and related subjects. Hendrick Willem Van Loon was at Cornell on a temporary appointment in the history department. I got to hear him speak on

Talleyrand as a very shrewd diplomat and on the Austrians as very shrewd politicians.

During the summer of 1917 my enthusiasm for entomology began to wane. I had taken another government examination, had passed it and had been offered a temporary job at Minden, Louisiana, to work on mosquitos. The salary was very low. My research was not going well. Among other things, I simply could not discover where the cercopids spent the winter. I liked going to school so much I didn't mind going on and on. I decided to change to another field. Why I so readily picked medicine, I do not know. The choice obviously was not well considered. I entered medicine with twenty-nine other freshmen medics. All went well during the first semester. My grades were A's except in anatomy. In February I was stricken with some sort of illness that gave me a temperature of 104. After tests, the doctor (an authority on TB) promptly said I had TB. I thought this over during the night and announced to brother George that the doctor was wrong in his diagnosis. The stiff I had been working on had been a coal miner and his lungs looked as if they had been heavily infiltrated with pepper. I could easily imagine what all that dust from the threshing machine had done to my lungs!

To shorten the story, I was out five weeks, very weak. I made no attempt to continue medical study and was presumably relieved from my work as an instructor of entomology. When I went to see Prof. Herrick one day he told me of a position in Arkansas, adding that he had written that I might be available. I said it did not interest me seriously. However, during the following night, I did some thinking: my prospects in medicine now looked very dim. I was thirty-three and really too old to attempt that course. The next morning I went back to the campus, told Prof. Herrick that I would like to have the job in Arkansas.

Presently I received a letter from Dean Martin Nelson of the College of Agriculture, U of A. He offered me a salary of $1,800 a year, a position as assistant professor and acting head of the department of entomology. I asked for $2,000. In the dean's reply he raised the offer to $1,900, and I accepted.

I arrived in Fayetteville June 20, 1918. It was a very dry summer; the streets were all unpaved and dusty. George G. Becker, whose place I was to take, met me at the train and helped me find lodging and a place to eat. On campus my quarters were in a small, three room, one-story brick veneer hut. I had it practically to myself. There was no one else in the department, not even a stenographer. I and my rolltop desk ran the department. Becker told me there would probably be no teaching for some time, so I tried to get some research projects started as soon as possible.

During that first year I lived at three different places: Dr. B.W. Wells' (botanist) on Ozark Avenue, at Albert Lano's (a blind ornithologist), and a family on Highland (can't recall the name). About the end of my first year, Becker introduced me to Mrs. W.B. Welch, 334 College Avenue. She had four rooms upstairs that she tried to rent to college faculty members — IF she liked them. If she got someone she did not like, she would raise the rent. It happened that Mrs. Welch and I got along very well. I lived in her house for some twelve years — until about a year after Eloise and I were married

(Eloise taught a year in Texarkana after we were married). My laundry was well taken care of by Mrs. Welch's washerwoman, a negress who boiled the clothes in an iron pot in the back yard.

For meals there were several very good boarding houses in easy walking distance of my room. One near the campus was convenient for my noon meal. Of course I walked the mile to and from school. Eating at a good boarding house set a fellow up socially. For Sunday dinner many of the best people from College and Washington Avenue could be seen at such boarding houses as those operated by Mrs. Strain and Mrs. Parks. The Washington Avenue set ran the town so far as society was concerned.

When the first semester was about to start, I was surprised to have a student, Eleanor Gilliam. I told her I could not teach just one student, there would have to be at least two. She responded by bring in another girl, Sibyl Sanderson. So I started teaching a course in Introductory Entomology. I taught from notes I wrote while teaching. The girls had access to some reference books. The following year there were three students, boys, and the next year, ten. Gradually enrollment increased until I was accustomed to more than a hundred students.

I must say that wartime conditions prevailed when I first came on campus. One had to have a pass to enter. The 1918 flu epidemic which took so many lives all over the country had hit the university. I volunteered as a night nurse in the campus hospital (temporary quarters) and five boys died as I sat with them. Years later when Miss Riley wrote her memoirs for the local paper, she mentioned the service I had rendered. The sad thing was that the doctors did not know what to give the boys except morphine and whiskey.

It was clear from the start that I was to put most of my time in on research. The dean indicated without delay that publications were needed in certain fields.

In January of 1919 my father suffered a severe stroke and I went home to help take care of him until he died at the age of seventy-five. Mother died in December, 1925.

During the summer of 1919, brother George finally returned from France. I took some time off and we went to Hillsboro to see kin and friends, then on to Pueblo, Colorado, to visit our oldest brother. On that trip we saw the Royal Gorge, Colorado Springs and most important, Pike's Peak. We went up by bus, twenty-two miles, and walked down nine miles along the cogwheel route.

Like practically all farmers and farm boys, my brother and I went fishing when farm work permitted. Later, in 1920, there were four of us — George K. Dodd of the Extension Service, Ridgell of Agricultural Chemistry, and Hunt of Animal Industry — who went on a good many fishing trips. There was Clear Creek, there was the West Fork of the White River. We would walk out on Saturday and stay until Sunday noon or afternoon. The distance was from five to eight miles. We never caught a great many fish, even though the other men tried seriously. I went through the motions and, with the aid of David Starr Jordan and Everman Manual of Vertebrates, I

identified what fish were caught. And I looked at and listened to birds.

Sometime in the fall of 1920, Miss Lillian Taylor, who had come out from New York to teach French at the university and happened to eat at our boarding house, joined me on a number of hikes. She had a short bob, smoked, and used profane language in class when excited. She was probably very lonesome, hence took our company as better than nothing. We men liked her because she was a good sport; she didn't mind walking five or six miles in the rain or mud. The walks helped me in many ways. I found my one and only pigmy rattler and also a cottonmouth snake. The best find was a swarm of 13-year cicadas that was just emerging. I have watched this brood emerge at the same place on the West Fork since — in 1933, in 1946, and in 1959.

In 1920 I published my first Station Bulletin, No. 170 on Beekeeping in Arkansas. At the Dean's request I had acquired ten colonies of bees, had learned to manage them, rear new queens, and introduce them. I had also learned something about the control of "foul brood" of bees. In that same year, J.A. Elliott, the plant pathologist, and I published a spray calendar as Arkansas Circular 42. In the following year I got out another Station Bulletin, "Spraying for San Jose Scale."

All this was very pleasing to the dean, but I had something more important to think about. John Elliott would come to my office several times a week and invariably say, "Why don't you go back to school and get that degree?" Having only a B.A., I did not need to be told what I had to do. Thus, much of my attention during my first three years was devoted to a study of material that I might use for a thesis at Cornell. By midsummer of 1921, I began negotiating with Prof. Herrick and Prof. Johannsen (who were to be my committee) regarding my thesis material and the residence. When the way seemed clear for my return to Cornell, I got in touch with Dwight Iseley who was employed by the US Bureau of Entomology at Bentonville and offered him a job at the U of A. He accepted under some conditions which President Futrall was a little reluctant to approve, but finally did. Isely took my place as associate professor at $2,000. His appointment was temporary, but it was understood that he would remain on the staff after I returned from Cornell. He has been here ever since, a devoted entomologist who has added much to the reputation of the department.

Back at Cornell I found conditions entirely favorable to my studies. On the campus I devoted almost all the time to my thesis. The search through the literature for all that had been done on the strawberry insects, the description of one of them as a species new to science, and the very considerable number of drawings and photographs required for a presentable publication — all these gave me enough work to do. Of course I attended the meetings of the Entomology Club regularly. At one session I spoke on Tarantulas. For an illustration I used one of the live specimens I had taken with me to Cornell. The live arachnid helped my speech. One professor was heard to remark, "If he is damn fool enough to handle that spider, I'm not."

By the first of June my thesis had been completed and accepted. My final exam was scheduled for June 3. It was not hard. My work was satisfactory

as shown by my being elected to Sigma XI. In Fayetteville, I was happy to be back in my old room at 334 North College. On the campus there was a special celebration, I believe the fiftieth anniversary of the founding of the U of A. I was proud to be in the procession in my new doctor's gown.

Before I left Cornell, Prof. Crosby had said to me, "Your work with tarantulas is very interesting, but what we want to know iw whether the black widow is poisonous or harmless." *We* meant the arachnologists. I told him I would find out as soon as I got back to Arkansas. Black widows were easy to find in the area where the stadium is now. Several specimens were brought in and I tried several on white rats. These showed some signs of sickness, but nothing serious. After a couple of failures, I succeeded in getting a widow to get a good hold on me, and expecting the bite to be harmless, I let the spider give me a good dose. The history of the case is in several of my papers. Here I shall merely emphasize that the pain was excruciatingly severe unlike anything I had ever experienced. Shortly after this experiment, I wrote Prof. Herrick and gave him a brief report, ending with the remark, "When it was all over I felt I had accomplished something." My report was the first authentic account of the effects of the poison of *Latrodectus Mactane*. The report appeared in the Journal of Parasitology, March 1923.

It was sometime in 1920 that I first meet C.J. Finger in the office of the *Fayetteville Democrat*. It was a very brief introduction, but he said cordially, "Come out to see us." I walked out to Gayeta soon after that and for ten years we were very good friends, very close. The visits to his home with the Squire, his wife and the five children, often every weekend, were a real inspiration. Finger was writing almost constantly and getting books published. He readily gave me advice and lots of encouragement.

C.J. liked adventure and he found it, as he said, wherever he went. He suggested that he and I go to Jasper, Arkansas. We went by train as far as Pettigrew and from there we walked, about forty-five miles, stopping overnight at Star City and at Boxley. We went by easy stages so C.J. could meet and talk to people. We got to Jasper on the afternoon of the third day. At the Murray Hotel, we soon learned that a murder trial was in progress. The lawyer for defense, Mr. Mitchell, introduced himself to C.J. and asked if he spoke German. C.J. said, "No, but my friend does." The accused was brought into the hotel parlor, accompanied by Mitchell, his assistant, the sheriff, and Mr. Murray. I translated the accused man's statements and Mitchell asked me to come to court, saying he might need me on the witness stand. The prosecution, Carl Greenhaw, has an interpreter, but Mitchell apparently did not trust him. We spent several days in Jasper, then went by car to Harrison, then by train to Seligman and home. Train travel was a little uncertain on the branch lines, not only because of poor roadbeds, but also because of a threatened strike.

Finger had a good many friends among well-known writers who came to see him. One who came to the University to lecture was John Cowper Powys, the critic. I remember him as very English. Another visitor was Carl Sandburg. When he came I had acquired a car, a new Ford coupe with a

Gretchen, the Baergs' daughter, then 3½ years old, showing how children react toward tarantulas if, as her famous father said, "the children have been properly brought up." This specimen was a family pet called Senora Papagayo. It was a beautiful golden-banded species occurring near Acapulco, Mexico.

self-starter. What I remember best is that while I was warming up the engine Sandburg was telling stories to Helen and Herbert.

Very soon after I arrived in Arkansas it became clear that I had a good deal of freedom to do as I pleased and go where I wanted so long as I managed to get some work done and brought out publications. The study of the black widow and the local tarantula quickly convinced me that the so-called poisonous arthropods would be my field. The reason: nothing was known about them. In 1923 I extended my territory a little by traveling to New Mexico. I spent about a month at Mesilla Park where the college is and walked over a large area of the neighborhood. I saw tarantulas, scorpions, and centipedes and learned a little about their life.

Back at the U of A I had agreed to teach a course in birds, requested by the Dean of the College of Education. I had begun to take field trips soon after my arrival at the U when Becker had shown me an area near town where many species were present. A very special stimulus for a more serious study of birds was provided by the blind ornithologist in whose home I lived for a short time. He knew all the local birds by their call notes and song. I was determined to learn these without delay. In about five years I was ready to publish a book to tell when the summer birds arrive, when they leave, when the winter birds come and how long they stay, when the transients may be seen here. For the song birds it would tell when they may be heard. Besides those items, there would be the usual about nesting, eggs, etc. The first edition of this book was published in 1931; the revised and much improved one in 1951.

In 1924 I went to Panama to study tarantulas, scorpions and related creatures. Barro Colorado Island in the middle of Lake Gatun was and is literally a zoo under natural conditions. Birds and various animals were frequently encountered along the trails. Most impressive, of course, is the Red Howling Monkey. The loud noise of their howls is like nothing else in this world; the voice box is unique among animals — it is made of bone. Tarantuals I was unable to find on the island but I found them in numbers along the streets, just a few yards from where I lived.

Now back to the campus. During 1925 I concentrated on teaching the introductory course in entomology and also an elementary course in birds. Besides, I was able to get out several publications on insects and the poisonous arthropods. In the fall of 1926, I got a three months leave of absence to make a serious study of scorpions on a trip to Durango and other places in Mexico. My baggage included a gun, a large Graflex camera, white rats. The U.S. vice consul there introduced me to Don Frederico C. Damm who was half Mexican, his wife all German. They let me have space in their house for my rats and guinea pigs. The work with scorpions went along well and I found several species of tarantulas.

After spending about six weeks there, I moved on to Tlahualilo. For me the best feature was a large colony of tarantulas. Here they were in such numbers as I had never seen before. I took one of the large tarantulas home with me; I called her Guadalupe, and she lived for some nine years in Fayetteville.

From there I moved to Mexico City, saw the pyramids at Toetihuacan and

bullfights, thence by train to Vera Cruz and by Dutch ship to New York where brother George met me. I stopped in Chicago to see a friend from boyhood days, and a Dr. Lock made a test of scorpion poison by injecting it into a rat's leg. He assured me that the venom was the most rapidly acting poison he had encountered.

In 1928 the IV International Congress in Entomology met in Cornell and through the aid of friends such as Riley and Herrick I had been given a place on the program. My paper was on "Some Poisonous Arthropods in North and Central America." At this congress sixty-eight countries were represented, and it meant much to me to see and meet many of the famous men whose names I had seen in books: L.O. Howard, S.A. Forbes and others. My claim that most tarantulas were essentially harmless was received with a good deal of skepticism by many of the delegates. But the papers went to all parts of the world. Clipping services soon sent me items from papers in Europe, Australia and among the articles were even a few limericks.

Back on the job in Arkansas I soon began to plan for the trip which was to be my vacation in '29. George and I had often talked about a trip to Russia. We wanted to see what the Bolsheviks were doing, but much more we wanted to see the place, the villages, streams that our parents had so frequently talked about. George secured passage on the George Washington and we got passports and visas in order. I readily got permission to enter Russia, but George failed because he had stated as his purpose "to visit relatives." It required many visits and hours of waiting in the Russian Embassy to correct this error. We visited in Berlin and there saw a number of Wagnerian operas.

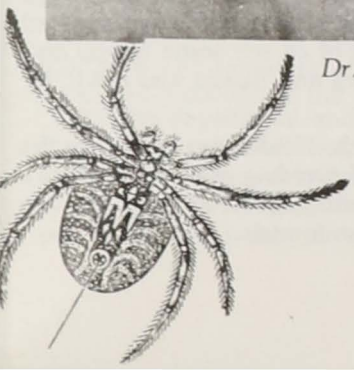
We went to Russia on a small German boat, leaving from Stettin and going up into the Baltic until we entered the Neva and docked in Leningrad. We used no tourist guidance, for George knew enough Russian to get along most of the time. Among the sights were the Peter-Paul fortress and, more important, the Hermitage Art Gallery. Noteworthy were the 42 Rembrandts. I wanted to see the famous physiologist Pavlov. We went to the area where his laboratory was supposed to be but did not see the great man.

The trip to Moscow was uneventful. We took a pullman, slept on a wooden shelf which constituted an upper berth. I undressed to my underwear. Some tourists lost their clothes and baggage by taking that risk; I did not sleep much, if at all. At the Kremlin in Moscow, we were carefully counted and later counted out. In the Moskva River we saw men and women swimming; some had on a little underwear, others were naked. I tried to buy some souvenirs, but had difficulty finding anything. Of the food in the restaurants, I remember cooked barley was served in the place of potatoes. The bread was very dark, heavy, and wet, hard to swallow. For dessert we got most excellent French pastry! Leaving Moscow we were on the train for thirty-eight hours without hearing any language other than Russian. We had little food. In Fedorovka where we had to wait all day we got some excellent food in the lousiest kind of a hut, alive with flies.

Late in the evening we got on the local train to Stulnivo. On the train we saw a number of Germans who plied us with questions about everything

Dr. Wm. J. Baerg, 1928.

Photo by J. H. Fields, Fayetteville



American. About midnight we arrived at our destination, but there was no one to meet us — the train had been faster than the telegram we'd sent from Moscow. We went to the village of Hierschan, where my mother was born and where one of her half-brothers lived. These people had received my letter written before we started the trip, but they did not expect us. They did not believe we could get into Russia. When we, on arrival, greeted them in Low German, they asked "How did you get in?" and "Why did you come?" Our stay with these relatives was very pleasant. The uncle had a never-failing sense of humor. Times were hard, they were short of food (we had meat once during the week's visit and that was an old hen) but we got enough to eat. Bandits repeatedly attacked and robbed our uncle of almost everything he had.

One day at our uncle's we helped him thresh barley. Before the war he had been selling J.I. Case threshing machines; now he was reduced to the old Russian threshing stone. The threshing is done on the ground where a small area is rendered smooth and hard by covering it with a layer of mud mixed with chaff. On this area the stone is rolled along, pulled by a horse until most of the grain is rubbed out of the hulls. Winnowing is done with a sieve with the aid of the wind. Before leaving the Ukraine we visited a number of relatives. Among the several places I remember best is the small house in Nicholaidorf where my parents started housekeeping. It was modest, having living quarters in one half and a barn in the other.

Having had a good look at the so-called Kulaks, we were ready to move south into the Crimea where some of the relatives on my father's side lived. One we visited was William Baerg, where we failed to register as was required of all visitors, because the local secretary could neither read nor write. The William Baergs lived in one of those old homesteads, a large and very well-constructed house with lots of interesting furniture, including two of the old Russian clocks. Our cousin and the rest of the farmers in the area were expecting to be exiled soon.

He took us to Eupatoria, a port on the Black sea where the beach looked so good we decided to get a swim. Baths had been very few during the past several weeks. We went in naked, but one at a time, for one stayed behind to guard the clothes.

At dusk we boarded a small sailing boat that took us to the passenger boat bound for Odessa. We found Odessa a clean and quiet city with well-kept parks and streets. During the afternoon we were on the train headed through Poland (because Romania and Russia were not on speaking terms). The only items scrutinized at the border were the postcards we had bought in Russia. In Lemberg (formerly Lwow) we stopped for a few hours, walked into the city to get some good food and most of all see some happy and cheerful people. The contrast between Lemberg and Russia was not to be forgotten.

From there I went to Prague, Vienna, Munich, Heidelberg and down the Rhine. During our trip we grew, as a matter of avoiding needless bother, a couple of good-looking beards. With canes, and beards, and talking Low German, we were never mistaken for American tourists.

Having stretched my vacation considerably, I did not stop in New York but got back on the job. President Futrall remarked, "You look a little like a Bolshevik." Barnett Sure, when he saw me, exploded, "Bill, you look like the devil." C.J. Finger took a good look at the beard and said, "Don't let anyone persuade you to cut that off." When I went into a restaurant every face would stare at me. I got so I would sneak into a corner — and then I proceeded to shave.

It was as we landed that we learned of the disastrous stock market crash. I had very little stock, and the ensuing depression had very little effect on me. Later we did get a cut in salary but it was not serious. That was because I was head of a department. Friends like the Leepers, just starting teaching, lost their positions and had to do what they could.

In the spring of 1930 something happened which took my mind off the depression or another vacation trip. I met THE GIRL! One day as I was driving along Dickson Street I saw Eloise. I knew her name, very little more. I asked her to ride with me to the campus. When I asked her to be my companion for life, she wanted a little time. What did she do? Asked Bob Leflar what sort I am. Bob promptly replied, "A most eligible bachelor on the campus, has a PhD and is listed in Who's Who." We were married on July 26. I kept my room at 334 North College, since Eloise had a contract to teach in Texarkana.

Late in May of 1931 we sailed on a small, slow boat to London and saw the places usually seen by tourists. I went to Rothumstead Experiment Station to have a visit with Dr. C.D. Imms, head of the Entomology Division. I best remember a plot of ground on which wheat had been grown continuously for a hundred years. From London we went on to Berlin and visited Dr. Walter Horn at the Entomological Institute. Among the towns we saw in Germany were Dresden, Nurnberg, Potsdam, and Munchen. At the latter, I went to the university to visit Dr. Zwolfer in entomology. In the Bavarian Alps, on the way to Oberammergau, we saw several of the castles built by the erratic Ludwig II, called the mad king. We went from there to Prague and on to Vienna where we found things run-down. From Vienna we went by boat down the "beautiful blue Danube" to Budapest, the crossroads of Europe, where we were royally entertained by a colleague, Dr. Cziki who had an office in the Museum of Natural History. From there to Paris and home.

We began looking for a house and quickly decided on what is now 1010 Park Avenue. The price was low, $2,500, but we would have to remodel the old house. The taxes were high because of new waterlines and the sewer. During the year I brought out the first edition of "Birds of Arkansas".

In the following year I decided on another trip to Mexico to try for more scorpions and tarantulas. Of the two species of tarantulas I got, one later produced a cocoon at the U of A.

Back in Fayetteville and at work, I pushed along publication of several papers on work underway. And in '34 it was again to Mexico. The new American vice consul in Durango told me a nice Mexican folk tale about me: When workmen cleared the ruins of the San Francisco cathedral, he asked one of the men if they expected to find any treasures there under the ruins.

"No," the workman said, "some American got them. He claimed he was hunting scorpions." In my previous visit I had gotten most of my scorpions from under the adobe brick of that cathedral.

Going north of Mazatlan in one of the local taxis called aranas (a two-wheeled cart) I found an area where tarantulas must occur. I found but one, a pale grey female, a mature one. She lived in the lab at home for fifteen years. I called her Senora Belmar. On the road to Acapulco, with the help of a Mexican laborer, I secured five mature females of the beautiful golden-banded tarantula *Aphonopelma smithi*. I kept two of the females for a number of years, and daughter Gretchen doubtless remembers holding one of them in her hand while she had her picture taken.

In 1935, Eloise and I drove through parts of Oklahoma, Texas, New Mexico and stopped for a week in Tucson, Arizona. The head of the department at Arizona U. showed me his collection of rattlesnakes in a room filled with snake cages. Eloise and I drove about the country a good deal, hunting you know what. Tucson was too hot for us, even in September, and after a week we went to San Deigo, California. I spent several days with Lee Passmore hunting trap door spiders, and, of course, tarantulas. The latter were there in plenty and in variety.

In 1936 I made one more trip to Panama with Charles Palm who was then on the Cornell staff. In Panama some of my old friends were still on the job. Also the tarantulas were still there, in the terrace and along the sidewalks in Ancon. From there, we went to Tela, Honduras, where we spent several days seeing the extensive operations in spraying banana plantations by plane. One of the United Fruit men took me to a ranch where, in a land leading from the corral, I found two interesting species of tarantula. One had quite curly hair, so I called her Curly. She was so harmless I could not induce her to bite. I had her about three years. Not only were there tarantulas, but there were ticks! They were very small seed ticks, and they found me, they covered me.

In 1937 I got busy and put my lecture notes begun in 1918 into a textbook which was printed in Russellville and put out in special binding. Until this year I had depended on my lecture notes which were continually changed and enlarged. "Introduction to Economic Entomology" served its purpose until 1942 when Burgess Publishing Co. brought out a much revised edition under the title "Introduction to Applied Entomology."

In late summer of 1937 we — Eloise, Gretchen (then three) and I — started on an auto trip to the East. In Washington we saw friends, foremost among them Elsa Jones who had been my secretary 1922-1934 and who had got an A.B. dègree with mostly A's while on the job. We also visited former student Frank Smith from whom we heard that young Evangeline Waterman had died of polio. Going south, we stopped at Myrtle Beach, and at Thomasville, Georgia we stopped to visit Herbert L. Stoddard, well known for his quail studies. We went on to New Orleans and did the usual tourist things and then went to Avery Island, which was owned by a well-to-do industrialist, Mr. McIlhenny, who was also an authority on birds. The place was alive with big black mosquitoes, so we went on our way.

In 1938 there were decisions to be made and things to do. We decided to buy Mr. Banks' lot to the east for $1,750, plus the two lots we owned on Mt. Nord. Young William Baerg arrived October 16, 1938, and I had promised Eloise that if she would produce a boy I would start to build a new house. The sale and removal of our house as well as the one we had bought next door had to be arranged and plans for the new house submitted to our architect, Keith Hinchcliff. For the contractor we had J.W. Cohea. For a place to live and put our household goods we were lucky to get a new house at 23 North Street. Since Cohea was building several houses at the same time, he would disappear some days, much to our annoyance. However, in November, between the two Thanksgivings (FDR had set one date and the governor of Arkansas another), we were able to move into our new house.

Eloise wants me to tell what I did to acquire some knowledge of literature. It was only after I got on the job in Fayetteville that I realized the need of the knowledge and my very great lack. Soon after my arrival I wrote a letter to some county agent who wanted some information. A few days later I saw my letter in the *Arkansas Gazette*. That really frightened me. To learn something about correct English and good usage I began to buy books on usage. Then, to get some knowledge of literature I called up Dean Virgil Jones, then head of the English department. Boni & Liverright were at that time issuing the Modern Library series. Taking with me a list of those titles I would ask Dean Jones to mark the ones I might profitably read. Looking at them today in my shelves, I see that they represent a wide range of literature. With these books and an Edison phonograph, my evenings were, in those early days in Fayetteville, well and profitably taken up.

The Fortnightly Club, to my great surprise, asked me to become a member. It was quite snooty, but also literary and therefore very beneficial. To belong to that group, to contribute a paper about once a year and even try to entertain the members at dinner (at the hotel until I got married) helped me a good deal in developing self-confidence.

As Eloise says, I had a great heritage in knowing German from an early age. Early is the word, because some features of the German language must be earned at an early age. I refer particularly to the use of gender. To learn, for instance that the chin is neuter, the mouth masculine, and the nose feminine — all this can be done only when one is young. In the preparatory school much of the work was in German. This was really very valuable training although I did not realize it until many years later. At Tabor, German literature was taught by an excellent teacher who encouraged and aided us in getting a small representative collection of the more important authors. Subsequently I have tried to read one good German book each year.

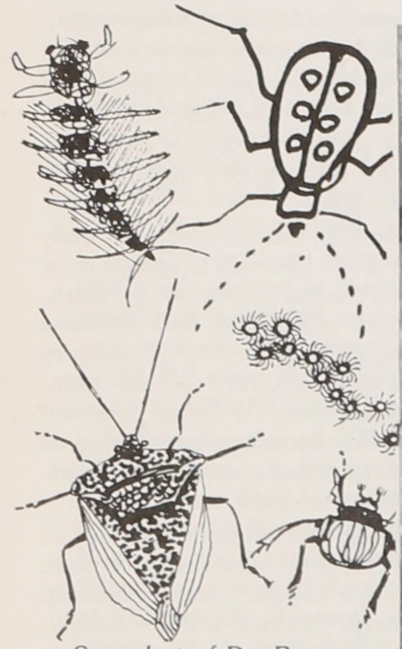
When retirement came in 1951 I had attained the munificent salary of $6,500 per year. We were lucky to get a Fulbright Grant enabling us to go to Jamaica. In 1954, we were fortunate in getting a Guggenheim Fellowship enabling us to go to Mexico, my fourth trip there, this time with the family. In 1960 came a final trip, to the West Coast and then to the East. William graduated with distinction (as he said because his name was at the beginning of the alphabet) in chemical engineering at Stanford. It was my first look at that university.

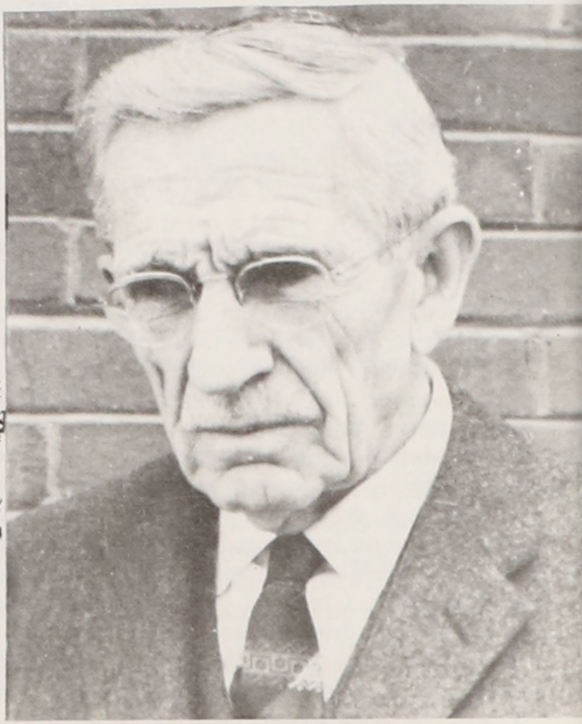
Not the least of the blessings that have come to sweeten retirement is that I still have a very good office in the Department of Entomology, go there five mornings a week, am keeping in contact with many men in the College of Agriculture, and am still seeing periodicals and other literature as it comes out.

During the thirty-odd years of married life, Eloise and I have been fortunate in having many good friends: the Nichols, the K.B. Roys, the Richard Stevens, the Thalheimers. When Bill Fulbright was president of the University, we were on good terms, were invited to Rabbit's Foot Lodge, and we entertained the Fulbrights at 1010 Park. They are still good friends, especially when Bill is running for reelection to the Senate. The Herbert Thomases are still among our friends even though they've moved downstate. Among the friends who have meant much and still do, are the student assistants I have had during my years of teaching and research. Notable among them are Charles Palm, now Dean of Agriculture at Cornell; Frank R. Smith, in a good position with the Food and Drug Administration; Thomas Quay, now professor at North Carolina State University; L.O. Warren, now professor at the U of A; and the two Robertson brothers, Hillard and Lewis, both with government agencies.

I have been lucky. Eloise and I together have been lucky. Barrie says, "God gave us memories so we would have roses in December." I have roses in December; Eloise will have roses when she reaches December.

W. J. B., May 4, 1963





Snapshot of Dr. Baerg taken in later years after his retirement

THE ONE-ROOM SCHOOL A CENTURY OLD LEGACY

by Jerry D. and Jeri Ford

The centennial anniversary of the formal organization of one-room schools in Washington County will be observed in 1984. In January, 1884, one hundred and twenty-nine districts were established to provide basic elementary education for the children of Washington County. (Lois Lawson Morris, in "School Districts of Washington County," FLASHBACK, August 1981 provides a list of the districts established in 1884 and later.) Most of these districts no longer exist, but the legacy which they built does--a legacy which grew out of hopes and dreams for the future and an unconquerable spirit to build a nation. Some of their names are quaint and strange--Jay Bird, Fishback, Sassafras Pond, Pilgrim Rest, Dripping Springs--but what they provided was a foundation of life which reaches today.

Even now, finding people who attended some of these schools is not particularly difficult. Getting them to recall those days is easier still. Without exception, those we interviewed recalled vivid, happy experiences of their one-room school days. One wonders if, fifty years from now, our memories of school will be as fond.

The one-room school, for many communities, was the identity of the community. Besides providing a basic education of reading, writing, and arithmetic, it provided a place for most social events as well as providing a place for religious services. Schooling did not occur just during the day. During the evenings and on weekends, there were singing schools, writing schools, ciphering matches and spelldowns. One of those interviewed said events such as these were well attended by the entire community with great enthusiasm. Participation often included competition with other schools.

Christmas was a special time at school. There were no Christmas trees in the homes, but there was always one at school. Gifts, usually handkerchiefs, were tied to the tree. Decorations were made by the children. Candles always lighted the tree. An older student played the part of Santa and distributed the gifts. the whole community was again in attendance for such a happy occasion.

The one-room schools often doubled as the community church house. The preachers traveled from church to church, and each Sunday a different denomination provided services. According to another of those interviewed, the people attended the services no matter what the denomination of the preacher. Of all the events which occurred at the one-room school, however, the one agreed upon most often as the most exciting and best attended were the ciphering matches. Winning was a matter of community pride.

Mrs. Stacy Phelan attended school at Black Oak for the first and fifth grades. For grades, two, six and seven, she attended Mt. Union (Bugtussle), and 8th grade at Sulphur City. She walked two miles down a rough, rocky road, and two miles back home. Plumbing was outdoors; the students had

to cut firewood to burn so they could stay warm. Lunches were taken in syrup buckets. Since 1948, Mrs. Phelan and her family have lived in the building which contains the former Buckner school. The school and church building at Sulphur City has been torn down.

Alta Boaz Gregg attended the one-room school at Trace Valley on Middle Fork, west of Sulphur City, which is now torn down. School terms were from three to six months, depending on the amount of money available. Some of the children went to school barefooted in the winter, when ice was on the ground, even grown boys and girls. They were hardly ever sick. Seats were handmade benches seating four children. In the middle of the floor was a wood heater. Lunch was biscuits, ham, cookies, fruit in their half-gallon tin buckets. Her mother bought her a new dinner bucket each fall, which cost 10 cents. A tin cup was tied to the handle of the bucket so they wouldn't lose it. Trace Valley had eight grades; when one graduated from eighth grade, one had an education equivalent of today's high school. Mrs. Gregg always liked to go home from school with one particular family because they had 14 children. She and several of the children would get to sleep on the floor in the loft — a big treat! Spelling matches for both children and adults were held every Friday night.

Flossie Opal Holt Drake started school at South School (now Jefferson Elementary School) in Fayetteville. They had a farm at Wedington and moved back and forth from farm to city, so she attended Howe School while at the farm. There was indoor plumbing at the South School, although some parts of Fayetteville did not have sewer at that time. Strict discipline was maintained in the schools. One of the teachers, Professor Groom, was over six feet tall and weighed at least 300 pounds. He always wore dark clothes and boys would put chalk dust in his chair. They would also put tacks in his chair. He used a strop at times. Professor F.S. Root, her father's good friend, was principal and knew every student's name. Boys would go hunting before school time and stand by the heater to get warm. The smell of the skunks they trapped was very evident.

Sons' Chapel is #4 on the list of early schools created in January 1884. A patent for 40 acres was issued to Michael Son and his wife in 1848. The school was located about six miles east of Fayetteville on Highway 45. A family has remodeled the old school and made it into their residence.

The Braden school is #9 on the list of early schools. It was located in the Braden community, east of Fayetteville, on the southwest corner of Highways 45 and 265, which now carries a Hot Wheels convenience store.

Illinois Chapel is #27, and was located south of Prairie Grove, and is now used as a community church. The students' mothers would prepare hot soup for lunch before there was any provision for a hot lunch program.

Garrett Creek School, #54 on the list, was between Garrett Creek and Cove Creek, seven or eight miles south of Prairie Grove. It was moved to its present location in Battlefield State Park in the late 1950s.

The Mountain Home School was 117th and was located north of Goshen on top of a mountain along the old road from Goshen which went east from

Habberton. Mr. and Mrs. Harvey Jones of Springdale had the school house moved to HarBer Village, Grove, OK. The original seats of the school were stored in the attic and are now in the school house. The chalkboard is also original as are the logs.

District #145 consisted of two schools — Roper's Chapel and White. Roper's Chapel stands on the original foundation, but has been remodeled. Across the railroad hollow, White School house still stands, remodeled.

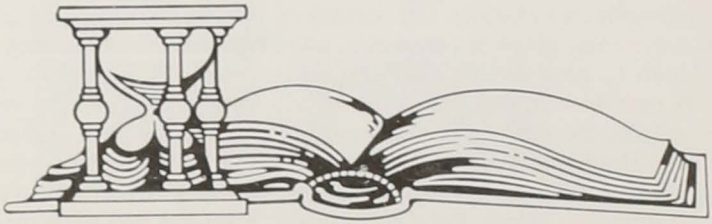
Located across the Illinois River on Highway 16 west at Wedington, Howe School was #44. The Howe-Savoy church is now located on the site. Florence Luttrell Gates started to Howe school in 1910. The school term lasted only six months, allowing the students to get out in time to help with the crops. Eight grades were in the same room. Children took their lunches in syrup buckets. Florence's dad bought them some new buckets which were really shiny. A long pot-bellied stove provided heat for the classroom, but on really cold days only about a dozen children would come. The children would stand to read their lesson. One evening a month there was a ciphering match and a spelling match at either Howe School or at Savoy School. They had health checks once a month. One time the professor who checked the children brought tubes of toothpaste and a toothbrush for each person. This was the first time they had seen toothpaste.

What happened to these schools since their beginnings? Some, like Fayetteville, Springdale, West Fork, and Elkins, to name a few, have grown and become strong multi-campus districts. Some have consolidated with other schools and taken on other identities. Many, even though the original buildings no longer exist, have become sites for community centers or churches and continue to provide identity and service to the people around them. Some of those are Illinois Chapel, Son's Chapel, Black Oak, and Richland View. Others have simply passed from existence and memory. They remain only as a number in the archives.

A century ago, through the establishment of a bountiful number of schools, the people of Washington County invested in the future. Education was important. Today, because of their foresight and effort, we have been given a rich heritage, strong schools and a bright hope for tomorrow.

Those interviewed and contributing events of the one-room schools were:

Flossie Opal Holt Drake
Florence Luttrell Gates
Irena Roller Hency
Hazel Verhoeff Sandlin
Alta Gregg
Stacy Phelan
B.O. Roop
Robert G. Winn



STARK BROTHERS NURSERY AT FARMINGTON

by Robert Winn

Residents of Northwest Arkansas between 1902 and 1970 will remember Stark Brothers Nursery in Farmington. The company still operates in many locations throughout the United States with main offices in Louisiana, Missouri, but its Farmington holdings no longer exist. The following information is gathered from letters from Richard C. Bentley of San Diego, California. Mr. Bentley's father, Albert T. Bentley, was for many years manager of the Farmington nursery. R.C. Bentley grew up in Farmington and is still interested in northwest Arkansas. He has generously provided funds for the establishment of the Dolly Sitton Bentley Photographic Collection at the Washington County Historical Society. Through his contributions pictures belonging to the Society have been catalogued and filed for preservation. Further information regarding the nursery was received from the Broyles brothers of Farmington, who worked many years at the nursery and were well acquainted with the Bentleys.

Stark Brothers Nursery is the oldest nursery company in the United States and one of the largest. Their business is the propagation and growing to market size fruit and shade trees and a wide variety of ornamentals and shrubs. In 1902 a branch plant was started in Farmington and continued operations for almost seventy years. During that period it was a mainstay of Farmington and surrounding area. At its peak operation a thousand acres were cultivated and more than 100 men employed during the busy season. Millions of apple and peach trees were propagated and grown in addition to shrubs and ornamentals. The apple seedlings onto which specific varieties were grafted were shipped into Arkansas from Washington State; the peach seedlings were grown from seed planted on local Stark land.

The first investment was a 200 acre tract bought from John M. Kimbrough. As the operation grew, adjoining land was purchased from Messrs. Black, Allen, Woods, Burnham, and Shultz. Later 165 acres were bought from Joe Stone. The Stone acreage was several miles northwest of Farmington. In addition to land owned by the company, most years at least 100 acres were rented from individual farmers. The operation was almost entirely self supporting. Wheat, corn, oats, and hay were grown to feed the horses and mules. In the early days no mechanized machinery was used. The company operated harness and blacksmith shops where the animals and equipment were kept in top condition. A blacksmith was employed full time as were men good at carpentry, painting, and stonemasonry. In addition to men to care for the planting and control diseases, two men were hired full time to hunt rabbits. As anybody familiar with young apple trees knows, rabbits can destroy young trees by gnawing the bark, especially during winter. The fields were all fenced with small mesh chicken wire, furrows plowed against the wire to keep out the rabbits, but even so, two men were needed full time to shoot these little beasts. After the first packing shed and

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CLARENCE STARK

JUDGE EUGENE STARK

EDGAR STARK

MAJOR LLOYD STARK

PAUL STARK

TOM STARK

LAWRENCE STARK

CLAY STARK

WILLIAM STARK

Stark Bro's
Nurseries & Orchards Co.
Fruit Trees & Ornamentals
Louisiana, Mo.

EDWIN STARK

Farmington, Ark.
February 12, 1935.

Mr H L Reed.
Louisiana,
Mo.

other buildings were destroyed by a tornado, all the buildings were completely rebult by skilled craftsmen already employed by the firm.

During the years 1925-1940 which R.C. Bentley says he remembers best, the pay per hour was from 10¢ to 30¢. This was for a 10 hour day, six days a week. there was no such thing as overtime for extra work. Young boys from 10 years up were paid the least scale. They were generally used in the "suckering" gangs, as water boys, and as "bud" wrappers during the summer months. A few women were employed during the winter months as "graft" wrappers. The teamsters, members of the hoe crew usually received the middle scale, while the more highly skilled who made the grafts and budded the peach and apple trees were in the higher pay brackets as well as the "straw bosses".

Sanitary conditions as we know them now, were non-existent, but no one appeared to be the worse for their lack. When one felt the "call of nature" there were always woods, thickets, trees nearby. This was called "going to the bushes." Each crew or gang, had a water boy who went after water when needed. During the hot months, this was a steady job, but during the cooler months the water carrier was a man who did regular work in addition to carrying water. Everybody drank from the same dipper. Many chewed tobacco and they usually drank with the tobacco still in their mouths.

Coffee breaks as now required by law were unknown; different workers would bring coffee to be shared by all. During winter, "budding" workers sat at long tables within conversational reach of each other; talk flowed freely, friendly arguments were frequent. All this conversation slowed or stopped altogether when the plant manager approached. He usually smoked a strong cigar which gave a clue to his approach. When one of the workers got a whiff of the cigar, or saw Mr. Bentley approaching, he would quietly mutter, "Heads up," which word would be passed along until by the time the boss arrived all hands would be busily engaged in their respective work with no conversation going on.

A few young trees sold locally but most were shipped to the main center in Missouri. From 12,000 to 15,000 trees were packed into each freight car. Some 25 to 30 carloads were shipped out each season. When cars were packed during the fall while the weather was still warm, the cars had to be iced to prevent the wrapped trees from sprouting. In winter the cars had to be insulated to prevent freezing; all trees must be kept damp, not wet, lest they rot; not too dry or they would die. The seedling apple trees from Washington State were about the size of a man's finger when they arrived to be grafted. Peach seedlings grown locally were budded in late June or early July. Each man was expected to bud at least 2,000 seedlings a day. There were no quotas, but men who did not measure up to at least that many were not kept. After the seedlings were budded, a boy or young man followed to wrap the new graft, or bud. The weather would get so hot in the fields during this operation that portable shades were built to be dragged along as the men did the budding.

Much the same process was used during the winter or dormant months

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Austin, Tex.

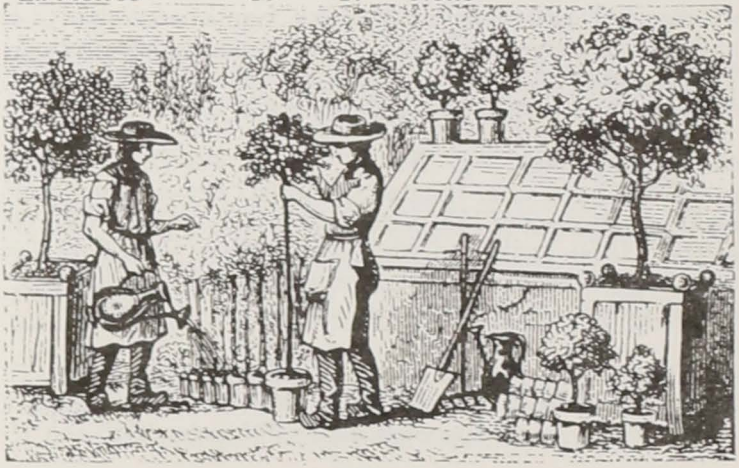
when grape cuttings were made. Frequently the hands of new workers became so sore and swollen from handling the knives that they would soak their hands all night in salt water until their hands became accustomed to the work. In the earliest time of operation women were employed as wrappers; they used twine on treadle sewing machines. Later dispensers were used in wrapping; at this period boys replaced women in this work. Work began at seven o'clock in the morning and continued until 5:50 P.M., allowing 30 minutes for lunch with no time allowed for breaks in between. In later years when an announcement was made that the work day would be reduced to eight hours without cut in pay there was much jubilation among the workers.

Removal of the railroad through Farmington spelled doom for the Stark operation. For a time the company continued using trucks to replace railroad cars, but this was expensive and unsatisfactory. Labor laws required higher pay scales. Many farmers were hesitant to lease or rent their land to the nursery. The intensive cultivation depleted the land, robbing it of many nutrients. The nursery naturally was a business enterprise; making money was its objective. Sometimes the land was cultivated when too wet, thus damaging the soil for future use by the land owners. The operation struggled along after the removal of the railroad until near 1970 when the operation was discontinued. The old packing shed stood for some years, a dilapidated reminder when the activity within it afforded the strongest support to the prosperity of a community. On its walls and ceiling were scribbled the notes that helped serve as a bulletin board of sorts of notices of activities round about as well as other grafitti left there by idling workers. The old shed stood close by the railroad siding where in the past so many freight cars were loaded and unloaded in one of the largest and most profitable business enterprises ever enjoyed by the community of Farmington.

In 1983 fire destroyed the old shed. Mr. Russell Broyles who still lives in the town, said that the shed smouldered for days as though the spirit that had been alive throughout the years when the Stark Nursery was such an important part of the town was struggling to stay alive. With the destruction of the old shed the last vestige of the enterprise diappeared.

A letter dated February 12, 1935 from Farmington, Ark., addressed to Mr. H.L. Reed at Louisiana, Mo. gives a list of "Employees, Age, and number of years steady employed at this place."

Date	Name	Age	Years	Time Out
1901	Al Bentley	59	34	10 months
1902	SA Buchanan	52	33	5 years
1902	MG Reed	44	33	3 years
1918	WB King	38	17	None
1905	WB Ellington	47	30	1 year
1917	Lasley Hickman	18	30	1 year *(should be age 48)*
1921	Lynn Dunlap	27	14	2 years
1904	MJ Keener	51	31	7 years
1902	VB Jordan	53	33	6 years
1905	MD Jordan	48	30	4 years
1905	WR Carlisle	57	30	5 years
1925	Fred Johnson	35	10	None
1905	Tebe Brisco	48	31	3 years
1924	Elmer Carlton	48	11	None
1924	MW Howell(Red)	28	11	4 years
1909	Doss Beavers	45	26	4 years
1909	Loss Beavers	41	26	6 years
1917	EJ Decker	50	18	None
1917	MJ King	62	18	6 years
1910	Jas Toney	62	25	6 years
1923	HJ Burns	52	12	5 years
1920	Wm Brisco	25	15	4 years
1924	MW Kritz	42	11	None *(worked at other plants for Stark Company)*
1925	Earl Clayton	30	10	2 years
1925	Brad Tuttle	31	10	1 year
1927	Richard Bentley	22	8	2 years in school
1910	Eli Morros	59	17	None



Frances York McKim, 6420 Aztec, El Paso, TX 79925 wants information on baby left on doorstep of a doctor. Year approximately 1923-24. Perhaps in Oklahoma or Arkansas. Please send any information possible.

Linda Hays Ker, 504 North Grand Avenue, Waxahachie, TX 75165: Am interested in corresponding with anyone who has information on the CRUMLEY family of Washington County. I believe that Samuel and Whitley POGUE Crumley were the parents of Eliza Cumbley INKS and Susan Crumley HAGOOD. I am descended from the Inks line but have a good deal of information on the Hagoods, too. This is the James A. Hagood family. Samuel Crumley married Whitley Pogue in Greene County, TN in 1819. Susan was born 1820 and Eliza was born in 1822, both in TN. They also had two sons (William Dotson (b. 1835 in AR) and Thomas W. (b. 1830 where?). I'll appreciate any help and will gladly exchange information with anyone interested.

James E. Eyre, 4396 North Striped Maple Court, Concord, CA 94521: Seeking information or family contacts for the Maxwell and Williams families listed in the 1850 Census, Washington County: Maxwell, Thomas W., Vineyard Township, Dwelling 93; and Williams, Mary (not positive this is the correct family), Cane Hill Township, Dwelling 121. From these families, John Williams married Sarah Maxwell December 24, 1854 in Fayetteville. The ceremony was performed by James Mayfield, DD, and witnessed by James Ridley (sp?) and Katherine Shumate. I am a descendant of John and Sarah who emigrated to Colorado in 1858. I have information on their descendants and of the Robert, Thomas and Martha Jane Maxwell families who emigrated to California in the early 1860's.

Burlene Brown Hilton, P.O. Box G, Lincoln, AR 72744: Vance Montgomery BROWN and wife, Hannah DEARING Brown, came from White County, TN, by December 1850 with Benjamin and Mary (Polly) WEAVER in December, 1850, settled on land somewhere in West Fork Township. Moved to Illinois Township, north of present Lincoln, about 1861. Would like to get in touch with others researching the Brown family.

Lynda Galyen, Route 1, Box 167, Garfield, AR 72732: Austin CLARDY, b. ca 1802 in SC, married Ruth MEDKEFF/METCALF in Lawrence County, AL in 1824. Austin was in Lincoln County, TN in the 1830 and 1840 cen-

sus. He was in Washington County, AR in 1850 census. He died about 1852 in Washington County. Ruth died when? 1840-1848. Austin married 2nd in 1848 to Anna COFFELT. What happened to Anna? Need parents for Austin and Ruth.

Nancy Oster, 3720 Manderina Ct., Santa Barbara, CA 93105 wishes to find other descendants of Isaac and Sarah ESSEX/ESIX/ESSICK, Young and Rebecca MONDAY, William and Leanna/Sarah EVANS, or Rainey and Juda CHASTAIN. All lived in the Washington County area in the mid- and late 1800's.

Mrs. Mary C. Bowen, 4885 Academy Street, San Diego, CA 92109 would like to know how the RICKMAN family was related to Amanda BAIRD/BARD who married Wm. V. DYER (son of Andrew "Jack" Jackson and Agie Dyer) in Washington County, AR in 1869. Elderly Mr. Rickman was living in the household of Amanda Baird Dyer about 1915. My mother can barely remember how happy she was when he would help her with her assigned "chores". Believe Amanda's mother was Rachel CLEVATE who married James Baird/Bard. Where? They lived where? In Missouri before moving to Washington County before 1870.

Mrs. Kenneth R. Taylor, 6565 South 49th W. Avenue, Tulsa, OK 74132: I am interested in finding the parents of Perniza OLIVER. She married Alexander SHANNON and they are both buried in the DUNAGAN Cemetery near Evansville, AR. In the book *Greer Family Reminiscences*, Mr. Ben F. Greer states: "A year or two after my great-grandfather came here, a family named Oliver emigrated to the county and settled east of Cane Hill and south of Prairie Grove, near the headquarters of Cane Creek. There were several boys and girls in this family. My grandfather married one of the daughters named Pernarza Oliver." If they owned land where they lived, does someone have an abstract somewhere that would show their names?

Mar. 24 1877
Prof W.E. Rosser opens a ten months school at Newburg, in the extreme western portion of the county on Monday next. He has built up an excellent school at that place and bright prospects for the next term has induced him to secure an able corps of assistants. Prof. Rosser is a first class educator and the people of Vineyard Valley are fortunate in securing his services.

Blood will tell but often it tells too much.

Don Marquis (Archy the Cockroach)

JOHN ROSSER'S ACCOUNT BOOK

Book found in WCHS files

Sometimes the things that survive through time give us a better picture of what was than all the words written by eminent historians. Such a memento is a small, leatherbound book that once belonged to Col. John Rosser who lived at Prairie Grove and whose obituary in the *Fayetteville Democrat* on January 15, 1877 read as follows:

> "Died at his residence in Prairie Grove township, Washington County on Thursday, December the 28th, 1876, Col. John Rosser, aged eighty-four years.
>
> "Col. Rosser was a native of Campbell County, Virginia in which state he resided until the year 1849 when he moved to Texas. He remained in Texas until 1868 from thence he came to this county. He was a soldier at Norfolk, Va. in 1814; was commissioned Colonel of Texas troops in 1863, and filled several civil offices from Justices of the Peace to Sheriff. But why refer to the soldier and the officer and those headlands that lie along the shore of life when there are other and greater attractions in the man and the Christian? Simple and unaffected in his manners, warm and generous in his nature, sunny in all the aspects of his life, noble in his aims, few men have enjoyed a greater confidence of friends or left a nobler example by his reverence for truth, moderation and justice. Col. R. raised three sons, Gen. Thomas L. Rosser, of Minnesota, who distinguished himself in Virginia during our late civil war; Capt. Rosser of Texas; and Professor Rosser of our county. He was married the second time and leaves a devoted wife who has the sympathies of many friends. He lived the full number of days allotted to man and we need not mourn his death. As well might we mourn his birth or his noble example. He was laid away by kind hands in the Prairie Grove cemetery on the 30th ultimo. Peace to his remains."

The little book mentioned above apparently served as an account book for his business which appears to have been either transporting or trading (or both) negro slaves.

One page is headed "Accts. of moneys paid by John Rosser, Jr. for Exspences in carrying a drove of negros from Virginia to Memphis; arrive at Memphis 3rd October 1847" and contain such entries as:

Paid at New River	3.12½
Paid for bacon	10.00
Paid for Brandy, oats, etc.	.25
(It appears to have been cheaper to drink than eat)	
Paid for shoos, paper, combe, etc.	2.29
Paid for spirits	.50
Paid for oven and banjo strings	1.12

Paid for chickens	.25
Paid Tole	1.12½
Paid for blankets	8.65
Paid at Abbingdon for shugar	.50
Paid for horse shewing & lynch pin	.75
Paid for apprehention of Gabrial	10.40
Paid Dr. Arnold	1.50
Paid tarvern bill	1.50
Paid for tent	6.00
Paid for soap	.10
Paid for gin	.20
Paid at Tennessee River	4.25
Paid for Chaney's shoos	.50
Paid for 2 pounds of butter	.40

Another listing of expenses, undated, lists

Cash paid for Isabella's coat	1.25
for bed corn	.25
Cash paid for handcuffs *(for Gabrial?)*	2.50
flannel for J. Rosser	1.15
postage on letter *(there are several of these entries)*	.10
laudnum	.21
1 barrel of water	.20

Another group of entries is headed "Samuel G. Tinsley in acct. with John Roper, Jr. to exspence of carrying 3 negros to the south for Bord, clothing, etc." and includes:

To exspence of carrying said negros	$93.00
Drs. bill paid for Barnett	15.00
Drs. bill paid for Milly	37.00
To 1 mattress & domestic	2.25
Buryel fees	8.00
To 1 blanket for Milly	2.00
To 1 suit of clothes for George	4.00
To 1 seel skin cap	.50
To 1 pair of shoos & socks	1.12

This accounting would indicate that Milly, George and Barnett were all fitted out with new clothes. It is hard to tell which one of them required the "buryel" fees.

One page lists negroes sold and the price received for each, as follows:

Pat sold to James Johnson	$700
Bob sold for	375
Tom sold for	600
Racheal to J.M. Powell	205
Billy Fariss to J.M. Powell	550
Chaney to Lin Cock	550
Gabrial	600
Isbel	550

Nancy & hir children 1,000

Later pages in the book, undated but headed "Walnut Grove", seem to be an attendance record, and list the following names:

Boys: Joseph Tollette
Thomas Rosser
Robert Giles
Claud Thompson
Alma Jhonson

Girls: Nora Young
Mattie Easley
Elsie Easley
Olly Barington
Ida Shumate
Mary Giles
Lilly Tollette
Florence Rosser
Maggie Tollette
Annie Hamlen
Dora Giles
Susan McKinzie
Eva Jhonson

The handwriting above differs from the accounts of trips with negroes.

Acpts of moneys paid by John Rosser Jr.
for Expences in carrying a drove of negros from
Virginia to Memphis arrive at Memphis
3rd October 1867

paid at New River	$3:12½
paid for Bacon	10:00
paid for Brandy oats &c	25
paid for Oats	75
paid for oats & hay	75
paid for shoes paper combe &c	2:29
paid for oats & hay	75
paid for spirits	50
paid for oven & banjo strings	1:12

Pat	Sold To James Johnson	$700
Bob	Sold for	375
Jim	Sold for	600
Paschal	Sold for	500
Anaca	Sold for	675
Sam	Sold for	400
Eliza	Sold for	[illegible]
Rachal	to J M Powell	205
Patience	to George Cooper	470
Billy Jones	to J. M Powell	550
Malinda	to L Burford	425
Lucinda	to Ransom Oden	550
Sarah	to Allen	470
Chaney	to Lin Cock	550
Jacob	to Adams	500
George	to Same	300
Milly	To Lin Cock	150
Billy Haly	to Rogers	650
Jack	to Same	650
Billy Collins	to Williams	600
Watt		700
Billy	Heden	600
Gabriel		$600
paid for apprehention of Gabriel		10: 40

paid for Brakfash	25-
paid for hors shewing	75-
paid for oats & candels	25-
paid for Barn	12½
paid for oats & potatoes	70
paid for bacon corn oats & meal	5:00
paid Dr. Arnold	2:50
paid Tarvorn bill	1:50
paid farrage	1:55-
paid at Dole gate	1:50
paid for oats & potatoes	55-
paid for bacon	1:00
15th paid at Sparta Dole	1:12½
" paid for Tenth	6:00
" paid for chickens	12½
16th paid for oats	12½
" paid Dole	40
" paid for oats	20
" paid for Bacon	1:85-
17th paid Dole at 3 gates	1:20
" paid for hors shewing	85-
" paid for Bifsors	20
	27:83

Pages reproduced from Rosser's Account Book

A GOOD MAN AND A GOOD MILLER

by Virgil Talbot

Madame de Stael once wrote, "We understand death for the first time when he puts his hand upon one whom we love." Sarah Catherine Talbot Rauch had already felt the hand of death upon her loved ones on that fateful day in June 1881. Some six weeks earlier she had lost her father. And almost three decades earlier she had witnessed death take her first two children at tender ages. Now her beloved husband, Emanuel H. Rauch was dead.

As a child so often does, Sarah turned to her mother, Julia West Talbot, in this time of sorrow. The bond was even greater between mother and child because they had just lost their husband and father, Thornton Smith Talbot. He had passed away on April 17, 1881 at the home of his son and daughter-in-law, George and Annie Caroline Talbot, who resided in the Cherokee Nation, Indian Territory.

Sarah was the Talbot's oldest child and George their youngest. To this brother and sister team fell the responsibility of caring for their aged parents. The old folks had been staying with Sarah and Emanuel but recently had visited George and Annie at their home on Moseley Prairie, a few miles west of Hico, the trading center that preceded Siloam Spring, Arkansas.

Sarah's grief and loneliness is brought to focus in her letter to her mother, written one week after Emanuel's death. The letter is one of several hundred that I have in what I have come to label "The Talbot Collection." It is presented in its entirety complete with Sarah's spelling. Words in brackets are mine to add continuity, correction or explanation:

June 23rd [1881]

Dear Mother I feel tonight so sad and lonely; my heart turns to you in your loneliness. How I wish I was with you this night. One week today we laid our darling Emanuel in his narrow grave. Oh [how] hard it was to give him up. You no how I feel. I thought I was prepared for it but I had no idea my heart would ake like it does to see him pass away.

I seen this before we left Prairie Grove. I saw there was something deathly had hold of Emanuel, but what it was I could not tell, nor the doctors could not. They treated him for ulceration of the stomach but at last it proved to be something like cancer of the stomach. Two or three days before the last he had a hemorrhage of the stomach. He bled over a pint he never was aware of it. He commenced sinking and nothing we could do revived his pulse.

If he could have been able to eat he would have lasted longer. You may say he starved. He could eat a few spoonfuls of liquid food at a time, for three months. It was so hard to see him wanting to eat and not able to retain nothing.

Everything tasted so good and natural, that is why I thought it such relief to see him out of his misery, but my poor heart is lonely. I would not call him back to be in the pain that he has suffered. It would be sinful to wish to see him suffer.

That was a terrible complaint he suffered with. He often spoke of you while he was sick. Says 'tell George and Annie to be kind and good to Ma for her poor heart is broke and she will never get over this last blow. Speak kind to her at all times. If I was well again she would be here with us now.' Then a Sunday evening after he said he would meet Pa in Paradise before many days where there was no more suffering of pain or death.

I feel like I could write all night what he said that was good. When we meet then we can talk it all over for we know how to feel for each other. When George comes you come with him. I want him to bring Annie and the children. I will try and come down sometime if I can. All things are so changed I can't tell what I am going to do. Give love to Bud [George], Annie and the children.

Your daughter, Sarah.

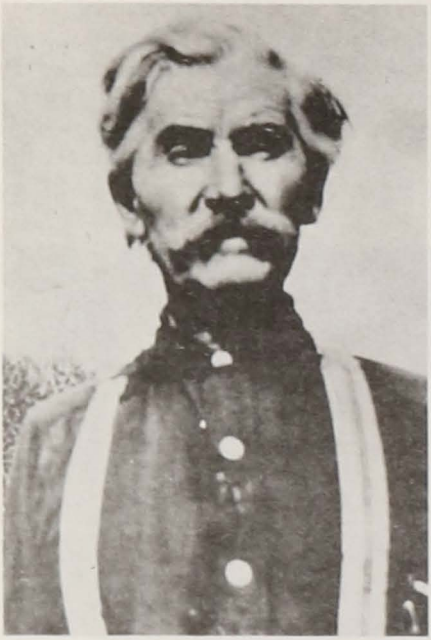
Nothing is known of Emanuel's parents. He was born June 23, 1826 in Reading [Burke Co.] PA. It is believed a cholera epidemic forced Emanuel and at least two brothers to move westward. By the mid-1840s they were in Buchanan County, Missouri. Emanuel was a miller and probably he and his future father-in-law became acquainted through his profession. Both men were also active in politics and Thornton served as county judge for one term. Emanuel ran for sheriff but withdrew from the race before the election. Thornton Talbot was active in getting the Hannibal & St. Joseph Railroad into operation as the first railroad west of the Mississippi River. He served for several years as a member of the Board of Directors of the railroad.

On January 15, 1851 Emanuel and Sarah Catherine Talbot were married. Three months later, Thornton and Julia West Talbot welcomed George William Talbot as their second son and eighth living child. Sarah developed a strong motherly love for her baby brother who she affectionately called "Bud." In September 1852, the Rauchs were overjoyed with the arrival of a son, but three years later he died. Their second son was born in 1856 but was destined to die eighteen months later.

On 28 Aug 1858, John William Rausch was born. By then the war clouds were gathering and Thornton Talbot, being a staunch Southerner, left Buchanan County for Daviss County, Missouri. Thornton's apparent refusal to sign an oath of allegiance to the United States cost him his holdings in the Hannibal & St. Joseph Railroad.

With the War's end, Thornton and Julia and their three youngest children moved to Benton County, Arkansas. Coming with them were Sarah and Emanuel and young John William Rauch. Emanuel leased a mill at Spring Valley from William Black and while he ground wheat into flour, Thornton handled the sales end of the operation. Shortly, he was trading in the Indian Territory with such men as John and Lewis Ross, nephews of the old

Cherokee Chief, John Ross, and with John Stapler, another well-known trader at Tahlequah. Thornton traded with Henry Chambers of near Prior Creek [Pryor] in Cooweescoowee District of the Cherokee Nation. He even did business with A. Nichols of faraway Boggy Depot in the Choctaw Nation. No doubt young George was soon accompying his father into the Indian country.



George Wm. Talbot,
brother to Sarah C. Rauch

Lizzie May Rauch, bn 11/2/70
daughter of E. & Sarah C. Rauch

Meanwhile Thornton and Julia's two unmarried daughters became the brides of Benton County men. Cordelia married William Cumming Douglas and Edwina married Fountain Pitt Bishop. On November 2, 1870 the Rauchs were blessed with a daughter, Lizzie May. Sometime after that they moved to Washington County. Rauch operated mills at Cane Hill and Prairie Grove before purchasing the Lea and Finley Mill at Robinson just weeks before his death.

After Emanuel died, Sarah was forced to give up the mill, but she did not give up one of his dreams. Years later in a letter to her brother, George, she tells of her husband's plans to provide each of their two children with forty acres of land. He had already made arrangements before his death and Sarah "took a new lease on life" to make his dream come true. She worked at various jobs, including school teaching, to earn enough money to pay off the mortgages on the land. John and Lizzie were presented with deeds to their parcels.

During his journeys into the Cherokee Nation, George Talbot met Annie

Caroline Smith, a full-blood Cherokee lady. They were married on August 14, 1876. The Rev. A.J. Estes of Benton County, performed the ceremony. The license was issued in Saline District by J.M. Ross, Clerk and recorded in Goingsnake District by William Covington Ghormley, Clerk. Intermarriage with Cherokee women was no simple matter for white men. George had to present a petition signed by ten citizens of the Cherokee Nation, attesting to his good character.

The marriage raised some eyebrows in the Talbot family. Thornton wrote, "given a choice" he and Julia "would rather she had been of our race." But the decision was George's and they would respect it. W.C. Douglas, George's brother-in-law, wrote "George must have seen something charming about her [Annie] or he would have taken a woman of his own race for a companion for life." All the family living in Arkansas came to accept and love George's "Cherokee girl."

Thornton wrote that Annie "has a claim on the edge of a beautiful prairie with good spring on it. It lays between two fine mill streams and good mills on them in four miles of his claim." The beautiful prairie Thornton wrote about was Moseley Prairie, probably named for John Moseley, a Cherokee who registered for emigration from the Chattahooche, Georgia area in 1830. The two good mill streams were the Illinois and the Flint. Hildebrand Mill was located on Flint Creek and Mitchell Mill was on the Illinois River. Annie's claim was where the Allen Cemetery is now located a short distance off the new Highway 33 west out of Siloam Springs.

It was here that Thorton Smith Talbot died on April 17, 1881 and his widow was staying with her son and family when Sarah poured out her sorrow to her six weeks later. In a double obituary carried by the Fayetteville *Democrat* of July 21, 1881, Thornton's and Emanuel's deaths are reported by an anonymous writer of Prairie Grove. It reads in part:

> "Death has been with us, reminding us of the brevity and uncertainty of human life, and the instability of human fortunes. Two of our friends who were citizens of our place [Prairie Grove] and members of our social circle six months ago, have been overtaken by that relentless fate which is sooner or later to overtake us all, and which no worth or virtue nor wealth or honor, no tears of friends or agony of loving ones can divirt or delay. Thornton S. Tolbert [Talbot] was a native of Kentucky. He moved to Buchanan County, Missouri in an early day. [1843] He resided there a number of years and was called to many places of trust, amongst others the Judgeship of the County. After the war he moved to Benton County, Ark. Subsequently to this place, Prairie Grove, to live with his son-in-law and daughter, Mr. and Mrs. Rauch. In April last he visited his son in the Cherokee Nation, while there some time in May [April] his maladies becoming worse, he quietly passed away.
>
> "Judge Tolbert [Talbot] was a man of much more than ordinary mind and culture. His life was one of usefulness. He

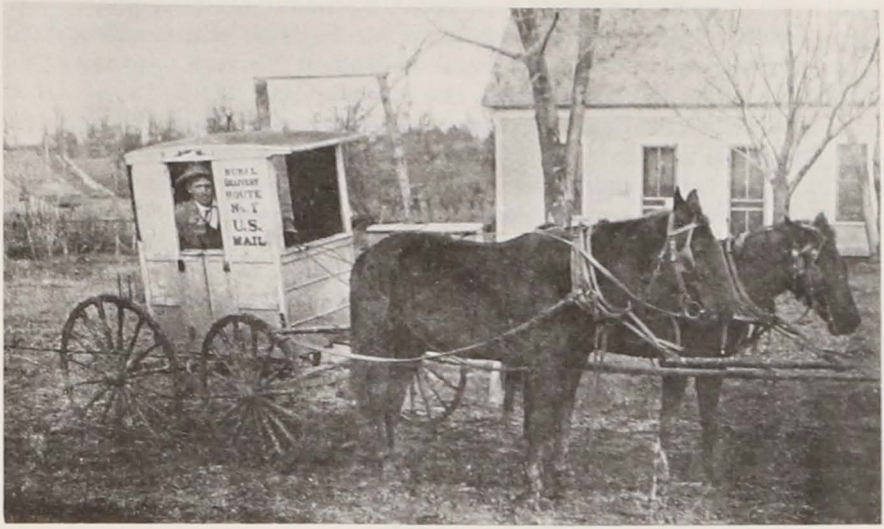
was 78 years old at the time of his death. He leaves an aged widow and several children and many grandchildren.

E.H. Rauch was also a citizen of Buchanan County, Mo. for many years. He there married the daughter of the subject of the above notice, Miss Sarah C. Tolbert [Talbot], who survives him. Mr. R. moved to Arkansas in about 1867 [1866] first settling in Benton County, subsequently on Cane Hill and afterwards at this place. While here he had in charge the stream mill at this place, his business relations with this community were exceedingly satisfactory and agreeable---his just, liberal and fair dealing is ever mentioned with his name. He was far from being of that school of business men who press the seller to the lowest figure and the buyer to the highest. He bought and sold at what the commodity was worth."

Thornton Smith Talbot with his wife, Julia Ann West Talbot and his sister, Sarah Talbot Payne, It is not certain which of the ladies is which. Photo was taken 1872 in Buchanan County, Missouri.

In later years Sarah worked at the Ewing House in Siloam Springs. John M. Ewing was as "kind to me as a mother could wish of a son," Sarah wrote. She died on February 15, 1915 and is buried in the Lincoln Cemetery as are her children and several other descendants. John William Rauch married Winnie Lou Snodgrass and they had seventeen children, including two sets of twins. One of his sons, Clyde, married Hope Leach, who was my wife's first schoolteacher. Clyde passed away in January 1983 and only two of the Rauch children survive, Harry and Ella Bea Rauch Mitchell. John Rauch

worked as a miller, merchant and finally as a rural mail carrier out of Lincoln where he retired in 1925. He died March 26, 1930.



John Wm. Rauch carried mail from the time this route was established, April 15, 1905, until he retired March 6, 1925

Lizzie May Rauch married at age fifteen and died at the young age of 32. Her husband, James W. Carter, was the son of Joseph Liburn Carter and Mary Jane Starr. Liburn Carter was a pioneer merchant of what was then known as Starr Hill. He is credited with giving the community its present name, Lincoln. Julia Ann West Talbot became blind and deaf in her last years. Something of the hardships endured by the aged of those harsh frontier days is realized in an incident remembered by Julia's grandchildren. When she became blind, her son George stretched a clothesline from the house to the outhouse, so that his mother could answer the call of nature with some measure of dignity.

Julia died on October 17, 1890 at George's home, then located near present-day Colcord, Oklahoma. George's Cherokee lady, Annie, died on March 5, 1890, during childbirth. It is not known where Julia and Annie are buried. Their final resting places, as well as that of Thornton Talbot's, are lost to the ravages of time. George Talbot, my grandfather, died on December 24, 1925 near Flint, Oklahoma and is buried in the Allen Cemetery on land he once farmed.

What of Emanuel Rauch? As with so many of our pioneer ancestors, his final resting place has been lost. But if a marker did exist no better epitaph could be found that that expressed by the Fayetteville *Democrat*, when it reported Emanuel's death in the June 23, 1881 issue and ended with these words: He was a good man and a good miller."

CATCHING A BUFFALO

From Bill Nye's Remarks published 1891

Editor's Note: In the last issue of FLASHBACK we introduced you to Bill Nye and his robust, rollicking frontier humor. We intend to have stories and essays from his pen in each of our '84 issues. Here are a couple more.

A PLEASING ANECDOTE is being told through the press columns recently, of an encounter on the South Platte, which occurred some years ago between a Texan and a buffalo. The recital sets forth the fact that the Texans went out to hunt buffalo, hoping to get enough for a mess during the day. Toward evening they saw two gentlemen buffalo on a neighboring hill near the Platte, and at once pursued their game, each selecting an animal. They separated at once, Jack going one way galloping after his beast, while Sam went in the other direction. Jack soon got a shot at his game, but the bullet only tore a large hole in the fleshy shoulder of the bull and buried itself in the neck, maddening the animal to such a degree that he turned at once and charged upon horse and rider.

The astonished horse, with the wonderful courage, sagacity and *sang froid* peculiar to the broncho, whirled around two consecutive times, tangled his feet in the tall grass and fell, throwing his rider about fifty feet. He then rose and walked away to a quiet place, where he could consider the matter and give the buffalo an opportunity to recover.

The infuriated bull then gave chase to Jack, who kept out of the way for a few yards only, when, getting his legs entangled in the grass, he fell so suddenly that his pursuer dashed over him without doing him any bodily injury. However, as the animal went over his prostrate form, Jack felt the buffalo's tail brush across his face, and rising suddenly, he caught it with a terrific grip and hung to it, thus keeping out of the reach of his enemy's horns, till his strength was just giving out, when Sam hove in sight and put a large bullet through the bull's heart.

This tale is told, apparently, by an old plainsman and scout, who reels it off as though he might be telling his own experience.

Now, I do not wish to seem captious and always sticking my nose into what is none of my business, but as a logical and zoological fact, I desire, in my cursory way, to cooly take up the subject of the buffalo tail. Those who have been in the habit of killing buffaloes, instead of running an account at the butcher shop, will remember that this noble animal has a genuine camel's hair tail about eight inches long, with a chenille tassel at the end, which he throws up into the rarified atmosphere of the far west, whenever he is surprised or agitated.

In passing over a prostrate man, therefore, I apprehend that in order to brush his face with the average buffalo tail, it would be necessary for him to

sit down on the bosom of the prostrate scout and fan his features with the miniature caudal bud.

The buffalo does not gallop an hundred miles a day, dragging his tail across the bunch grass and alkali of the boundless plains.

He snorts a little, turns his bloodshot eyes toward the enemy a moment and then, throwing his cunning little taillet over the dash-boardlet, he wings away in an opposite direction.

The man who could lie on his back and grab that vision by the tail would have to be moderately active. If he succeeded, however, it would be a question of the sixteenth part of a second only, whether he had his arms jerked out by the roots and scattered through space or whether he had strength of will sufficient to yank out the withered little frizz and hold the quivering ornament in his hands. Few people have the moral courage to follow a buffalo around over half a day holding on by the tail. It is said that a Sioux brave once tried it, and they say his tracks were thirteen miles apart. After merrily sauntering around with the buffalo one hour, during which time he crossed the territories of Wyoming and Dakota twice and surrounded the regular army three times, he became discouraged and died from the injuries he had received. Perhaps, however, it may have been fatigue.

It might be possible for a man to catch hold of the meager tail of a meteor and let it snatch him through the coming years.

It might be, that a man with a strong constitution could catch a cyclone and ride it bareback across the United States and then have a fresh one ready to ride back again, but to catch a buffalo bull in the full flush of manhood, as it were, and retain his tail while he crossed three reservations and two mountain ranges, requires great tenacity of purpose and unusual mental equipoise.

Remember, I do not regard the story I refer to as false, at least I do not wish to be so understood. I simply say that it recounts an incident that is rather out of the ordinary. Let the gentle reader lie down and have a Jackrabbit driven across his face, for instance. The J. Rabbit is as likely to brush your face with his brief and erect tail as the buffalo would be. Then carefully note how rapidly and promptly instantaneous you must be. Then closely attend to the manner in which you abruptly and almost simultaneously, have not retained the tail in your memory.

A few people may have successfully seized the grieved and startled buffalo by the tail, but they are not here to testify to the circumstances. They are dead, abnormally and extremely dead.

IS THE HELP OUR READERS GIVE!

BIOGRAPHY OF SPARTACUS

From Bill Nye's Remarks published 1891

PARTACUS, WHOSE GIVEN NAME seems to have been torn off in its passage down through the corridors of time, was born in Thrace and educated as a shepherd. While smearing the noses of the young lambs with tar one spring, in order to prevent the snuffles among them, he though that he would become a robber. It occured to him that this calling was the only one he knew of that seemed to be open to the young man without means.

He had hardly got started, however, in the "hold up" industry, when he was captured by the Romans, sold at cost and trained as a gladiator, in a school at Capua. Here he succeeded in stirring up a conspiracy and uniting two hundred or more of the grammar department of the school in a general ruction, as it was then termed.

The scheme was discovered and only seventy of the number escaped, headed by Spartacus. These snatched cleavers from the butcher shops, pickets from the Roman fences and various other weapons, and with them fought their way to the foot hill where they met a wagon train loaded with arms and supplies. They secured the necessary weapons whereby to go into a general war business and established themselves in the crater of Mount Vesuvius.

Spartacus was a man of wonderful carriage and great physical strength. It had always been his theory that a man might as well die of old age as to feed himself to a Roman menagerie. He maintained that he would rather die in a general free fight, where he had a chance, than to be hauled around over the arena by one leg behind a Numidian lion.

So he took his little band and fought his way to Vesuvius. There they had a pleasant time camping out nights and robbing the Romans daytimes. The excitement of sleeping in a crater, added a wonderful charm to their lives. While others slept cold in Capua, Spartacus cuddled up to the crater and kept comfortable.

For a long time the little party had it all their own way. They sniffed the air of freedom and lived on Roman spring chickens on the half shell, and it beat the arena business all hollow.

At last, however, an army of 3,000 men was sent against them, and Spartacus awoke one morning to find himself blocked up in his crater. For a time the outlook was not cheering. Spartacus thought of telegraphing the war department for reinforcements, but finally decided not to do so.

Finally, with ladders made of wild vines, the little garrison slipped out through what had seemed an impassable fissure in the crater, got in the rear of the army and demolished it completely. That's the kind of man that Spartacus was. Fighting was his forte.

OUR READERS WRITE

Some twenty years ago I visited the Dunagan Cemetery in Washington County, Arkansas, near Evansville. I copied the name of Martha P. Chastain, wife of B.L. Chastain, died Oct. 26, 1879, age 45 years, 9 mo. (Bible record shows b. 26 June 1834.) I was interested in this person because she was the sister of my great-grandmother Emily Elizabeth (Tatum) Sutter who died on the thirteenth of March 1940, just 12 days after her 99th birthday, at Stilwell, Oklahoma. I do not find this name in your publication of cemetery information for Dunagan Cemetery. Don't know if the stone has been destroyed when the survey was done, or if it was inadvertently omitted. Thought you might like to add it to your records. (Mrs. Kenneth R. Taylor, Tulsa, OK)

I believe many of your readers would be interested in a new publication, the first published history of Ottawa County (Indian Territory, Oklahoma). It is quite an outstanding book and history buffs and genealogists alike should find it interesting and useful. The author, Velma Nieberding, is a member of Arkansas pioneer families, born in Benton County, descendant of the Seamster, Presley, Kelton, Cole families. The book is hardback, 600 pages, and includes a surname index of over 2,600 surnames with 236 family histories. The history is available for $40 postpaid from Velma Nieberding, 501 I Street Southeast, Miami, OK 74354. (Hildred Hughes Ables, Miami, OK)

The first issue of *The Goingsnake Messenger*, published by the Goingsnake District Heritage Association, c/o Henderson Library, Westville, OK 74965 is available and will be of interest to those with Cherokee ancestry. Dues in this Association are: Individual $5.00, Family $7.50; Contributing $10.00. New members will get a copy of the first issue. We hope to publish two issues a year for starters. (Virgil Talbot, Colcord, OK)

I would rather start a family than finish one.
Don Marquis (Archy the Cockroach)

EARLY PHOTOGRAPHY IN NORTHWEST ARKANSAS

by Bob Besom

Unidentified photos by J.H. Field (lt.) and B.E. Grabill (rt.)

Our debt to the handful of people who have taken up the art of photography in Northwest Arkansas over the years is a very large one. The pictures that have survived from the early era of photography--from, say, the 1850s to World War I--tell us much of what we now know about a world we have lost.

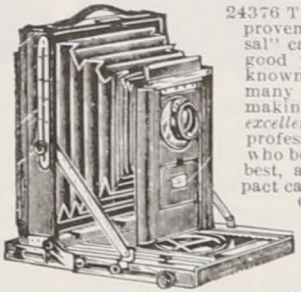
Information on the early photographers is hard to come by today. Most of the facts we have come from the photographs themselves, U.S. Census records, business directories, and scattered references in newspapers. From these sources, 132 individuals in the region have been identified as photographers between 1850 and 1915. Fifty-three of these lived in Washington County, 32 in Benton, 30 in Carroll, 10 in Madison, and seven in Newton County. The smallest town to be included was Compton (population 25) in Newton County where W.L. Curnutt was listed as a photographer in the 1912 state business directory. At least 16 of the photographers were female, enough that we must consider the trade an important early means of employment for women.

Almost nothing is known about the pre-Civil War beginnings. We know from newspapers that C.P. Moore opened a temporary daguerreotype studio in Little Rock in 1842. Photographic portraits were still very much a novelty then, the daguerreotype (recognized easily by its mirrorlike appearance) having been introduced to the United States only two years earlier. Daguerreotype photographers probably found their ways to heavily-populated Northwest Arkansas sometime in the 1840s. But the earliest photographer we know of was Mrs. M.A. Henry who had a studio from 1856 to 1859 on the Fayetteville Square. The first Northwest Arkansas picture the Shiloh Museum has identified was taken during the Civil War. It is a photograph of a Union artillery battery which tradition has it was posing in front of the Walker-Stone House in Fayetteville in 1863.

The early picture-takers in Northwest Arkansas were a mobile lot. Of the 132 individuals identified, only a few seem to have stayed put for as long as five years. Most seem to have drifted into a community, taken everyone's picture they could, and moved quickly on to some other place. A few played up their mobility, advertising themselves as "traveling photographers" or "tent photographers." Many packed up light-weight equipment and minimal props and traveled the back-country in search of customers. The first photo studio in Eureka Springs was a small gallery on wheels that could be easily moved about. It was owned by Mary Harris. In the late 1880s, J.W. Hansard used the railroad to travel regularly from Fayetteville to the new Madison County town of St. Paul in search of business. In the early years of this century, Emmet Lee operated a studio and "darkroom" out of a tent near the Winslow railroad tunnel.

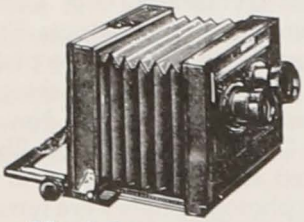
This ad cut from a Montgomery Ward catalog reprint, 1895. How do you like those prices?

The Carlton Camera.



24376 The "Carlton" is an improvement on the "Universal" camera, having all the good points of that well-known box, and in addition many qualities of its own, making it the camera *par excellence* to the amateur or professional photographer who believes in having the best, and is the most compact camera in the market. Owing to the extra length of the bellows, the camera can be used for copying and enlarging, if desired. It has reversible back. All metal work is brass and polished lacquered. The camera box is made of select mahogany, highly polished. The bed carries its own tripod top, adapted to our No. 24451 Combination Tripod. The top is of metal, neatly fitted in the bed, and revolves easily and smoothly, permitting the operator to adjust camera in any direction. A small milled head screw fastens it firmly in position. The Carlton cameras, in sizes to 8x10 inclusive, are furnished with either a long or short canvas case. The former carries the camera and three holders only; the latter will hold the camera, six holders, combination tripod, and in sizes to 6½x8½ inclusive, there is a compartment for lenses. In ordering, specify style of case desired

Size of view		Double swing		Price.
4 x5		"	"	$30.62
"	4¼x6½	"	"	31.50
"	5 x7	"	"	35.00
"	5 x8	"	"	36.75
"	6½x8½	"	"	39.37
"	8 x10	"	"	43.75



New Model Steroscopic Cameras.

Several photographers "traveled" in a different sense, that is in and out of the field. Typically they moved from photography to jewelry stores or newspaper enterprises. George W. Kennan, for example, came to Springdale in 1881 to bork in a nursery. In 1883 he went to Evansville (Washington County) to learn photography and watch-repairing under Thomas Hughes. Soon thereafter, Kennan returned to Springdale and started his own photography and watch-repair business. In the late 1880s he turned totally to the jewelry business. Though it was possible to study instruction manuals and be self-taught, it is more likely that photographers learned the trade just as Kennan had, from other photographers. Also, it was not uncommon for early photographers to combine the occupation with some other. William Anthony was a jeweler and photographer in Fayetteville in 1859. Hughes of Evansville was a grocer as well as photographer. Others combined farming, jewelry sales, teaching, barbering, and newspaper work with photography.

Photography was sometimes a family affair. Ottis and Ella Adamson operated a studio in Springdale. And members of the McCollister, Hansard, and Suttle families were found in various towns throughout the region.

In the 1880s certain towns such as Fayetteville, Eureka Springs, and Siloam Springs, grew large enough and prosperous enough to support commercial photography shops complete with staff, heavy studio cameras, and a variety of studio props. They offered special services such as enlargements, crayon, oil, or pastel finishes, and fancy matting and framing. They also adopted new ideas on how to attract customers. In Eureka Springs in the 1890s they produced stereo cards in great numbers and all over the region in the early 1900s they produced picture postcards. Group pictures--especially school children, but also church gatherings, and employees of businesses--have survived in significant numbers and must have led to multiple sales of prints. Photographers could also expect to sell many copies of pictures commemorating special events (such as the visit of the Italian ambassador to the United States to Tontitown in 1905).

Having one's picture made was obviously a special event. Even on the farm people carefully arranged the background and dressed up for the occasion. In town the appearance of a camera in the streets often attracted a crowd. When "picture day" arrived at a rural school, non-students sometimes worked their way to the back of the group just to have their pictures made.

There is only one photographer that we have a very complete history on. He was Burch Enos Grabill of Fayetteville. We know a lot about him because he stayed on the job for 15 years (1901-1916) and not only took an enormous quantity of pictures, but also signed them. In addition, we have been able to interview one of his soms, W.B. Grabill of Shreveport, Louisiana. Grabill had a studio on the Fayetteville Square. He was the official photographer for the University of Arkansas for almost 15 years. He kept up with the latest advances in the field and excelled in portrait work as well as in recording community events and scenes.

Grabill was born in Ohio in 1868, attended Wilmington College in Wilmington, Ohio, and learned the photography profession in Indiana and as a

U.S. Army photographer during the Spanish-American War. He left Fayetteville during World War I to photograph troops training in Louisiana and settled in Shreveport after the war. Grabill made an imortant contribution to Louisiana history in recording the 1920s and 1930s oil boom days of Northwest Louisiana. He died in 1936.

While in Fayetteville, Grabill witnessed the popularization of photography as more and more individuals took up "kodaking" as a hobby. A lightweight box camera had been introduced by George Eastman in the 1880s and by the early twentieth century it could be purchased through a mail-order catalog for less than two dollars. For another $3.68 the serious buff could buy a complete outfit, including tools and chemicals, for developing prints. Robert G. Winn, who grew up in Winslow, remembers that his brother acquired what may have been the community's first camera just before World War I. It was a prize he received for collecting tags from a certain brand of chewing tobacco. the camera was a minor sensation in the town and the pictures it produced, which were processed at a studio in Fayetteville, remain some of the most important candid images we have of pre-war Winslow.

Business Cards of three early Fayetteville photographers

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Send in your family's
history, diaries,
letters,
old photographs,
documents.
Share your memories
with us.

YOUR GRATEFUL EDITORS.